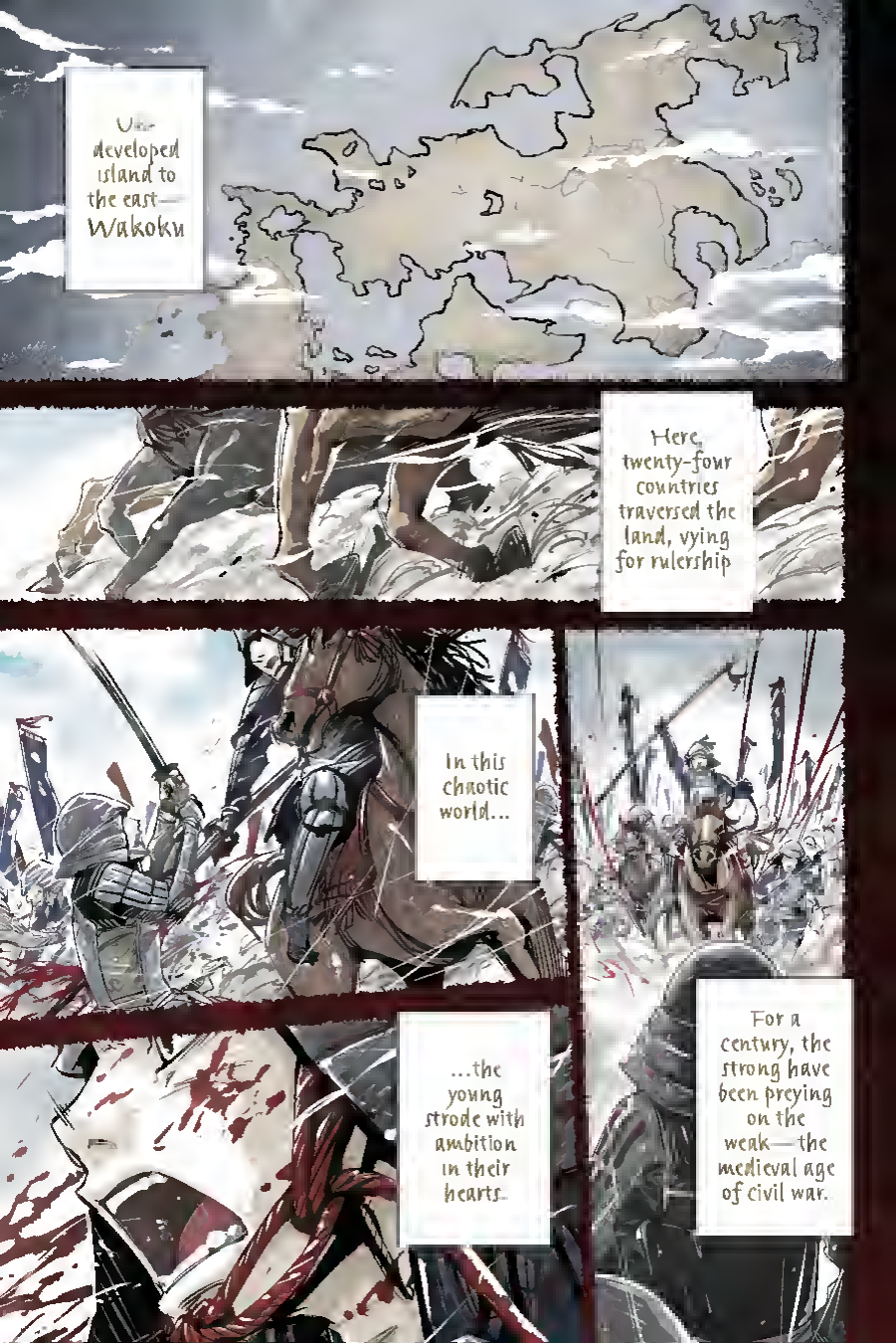
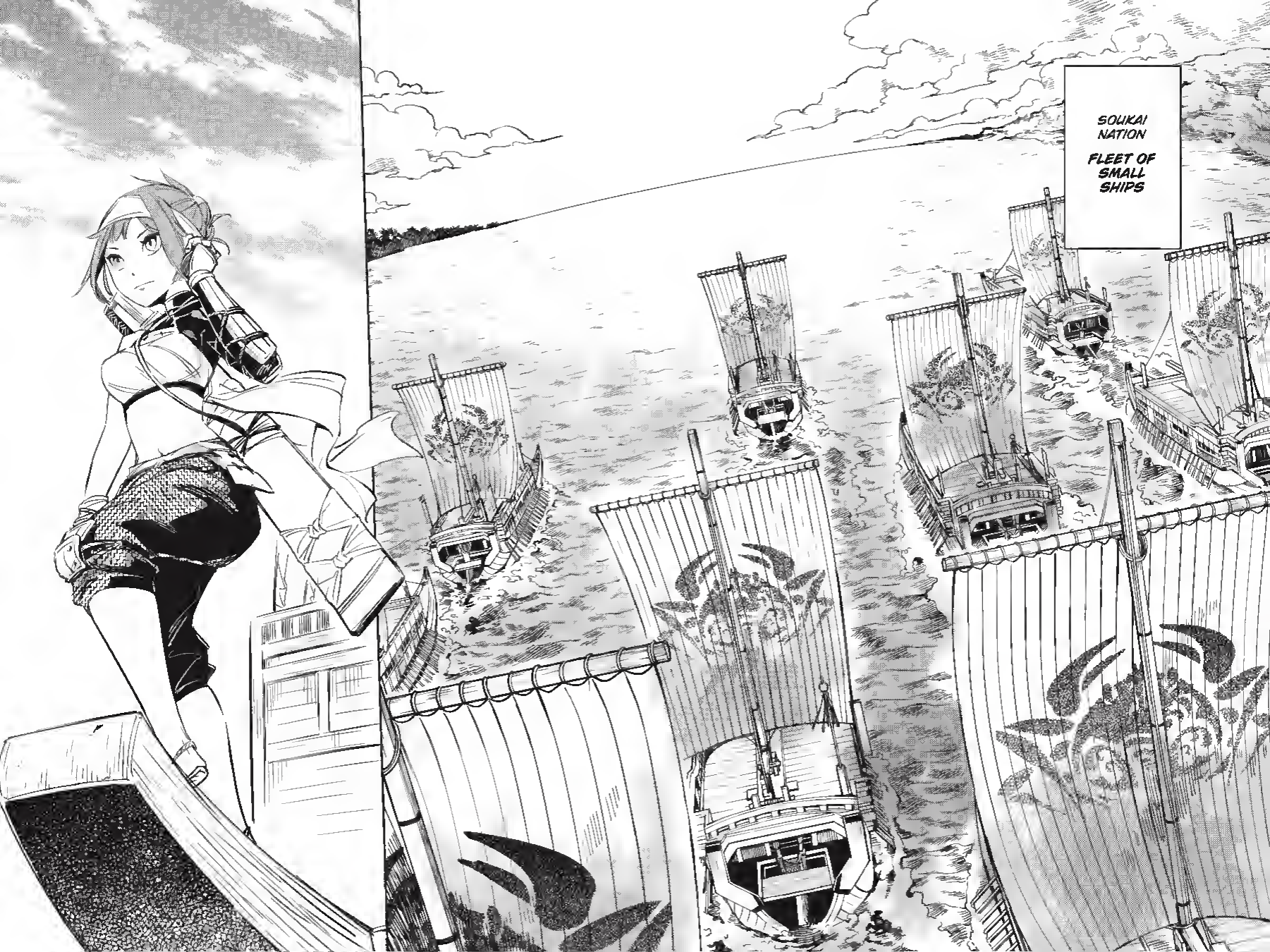
CHAPTER
1
Hinowa ga CRUSH!
STORY: TAKAHIRO ART: strelka


Undeveloped island to the east—Wakoku
Here, twenty-four countries traversed the land, vying for rulership
In this chaotic world...
For a century, the strong have been preying on the weak—the medieval age of civil war.
...the young strode with ambition in their hearts.

CHAPTER 1
THE BATTLE OF RYUUMON CASTLE
STORY: Takahiro
ART: strelka

Hinowa ga CRUSH!

HA-HA HA!
WHOSE STOMACH WAS THAT?
GUUUUU (GRRRROWL)
JUST BE PATIENT A LITTLE LONGER.
THE CAPTAIN WENT DOWN TO THE WATER JUST A MOMENT AGO.
OH! I CAN'T WAIT!
BAGA
BAGA (FLAP)
WE'VE GOT A FINE BREEZE.

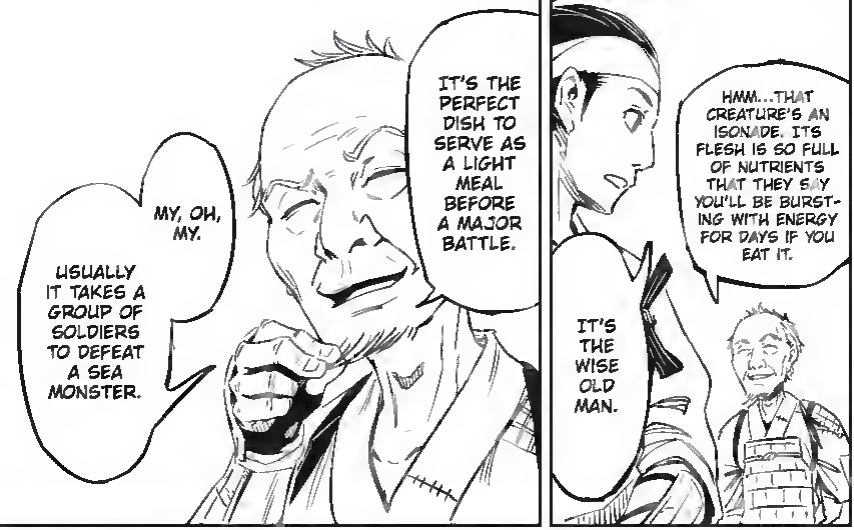

SOUKAI
NATION
FLEET OF
SMALL
SHIPS

HEY, YOU OVER THERE! MISSY!
GET AWAY FROM THE WATER! THERE ARE MONSTERS IN THESE PARTS!
THANKS FOR THE WARNING, GUYS!
YOU TRYING TO GET YOURSELF KILLED BEFORE THE BATTLE EVEN STARTS!?
BUT SHE'LL BE FINE. OUR CAPTAIN'S DOING THIS ON PURPOSE.
ALL OF US ON HER SHIP ARE OKAY WITH IT!
ARE YOU CRAZY!?
THERE ARE CREATURES OF THE DEEP HERE! REAL MONSTERS!
FUMIO!
!
BASHA
BASHA (SPLASH)

EVERY-ONE GET DOWN! QUICK!
YOU'LL BE CRUSHED!
GOGO (SLOOP)
HERE HE COMES.
ZAPAA (SLOOSH)
JUST WHAT I WANTED!

ZUN (SLASH)
KU (SPLIT)

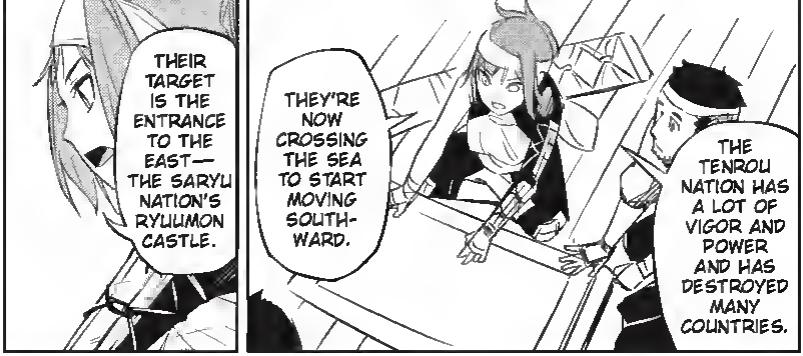
WHA...
JUST WHO...
...IS SHE?
DO CRUNCH
I'M HINOWA.
HINOWA OF YAENAMI VILLAGE.
SHE HEARD US!

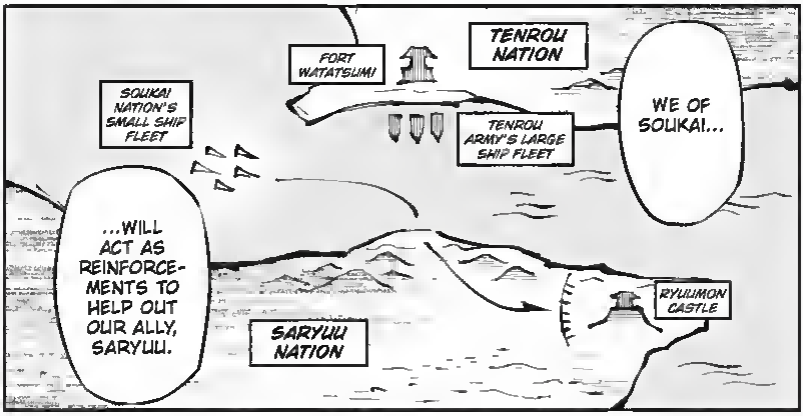

HMM...THAT CREATURE'S AN ISONADE. ITS FLESH IS SO FULL OF NUTRIENTS THAT THEY SAY YOU'LL BE BURSTING WITH ENERGY FOR DAYS IF YOU EAT IT.
IT'S THE WISE OLD MAN.
IT'S THE PERFECT DISH TO SERVE AS A LIGHT MEAL BEFORE A MAJOR BATTLE.
MY, OH, MY.
USUALLY IT TAKES A GROUP OF SOLDIERS TO DEFEAT A SEA MONSTER.

IF SHE COULD DO IT IN ONE STROKE OF HER SWORD...
...THEN SHE'S QUITE AN AMAZING LITTLE GAL.

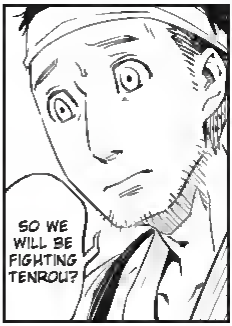
NOW THAT THE MONSTER'S BEEN DEBONED, I'M GOING TO MINCE IT.
TON (CHOP)
TON
MIX IN SOME MISO AND SOY SAUCE...
... POUND IT AGAIN ...
...ADD IN THE SCAL-LIONS...
...DO THE LAST POUND...
TA- (TAP)
TA
TA
...AND IT'S DONE!
IT'S THE SOUKAI NATION'S ONBOARD CUISINE!
ISONADE TARTARE!
DAN (THUNK)

LET'S NOT RUSH AND REALLY TAKE OUR TIME TO ENJOY THIS.
PLEA-SE MARRY ME!
I'VE WAITED FOR THIS!
AW, YEAH! YOU REALLY ARE A FISHING MASTER!
SO LET'S GO OVER THE SITUATION AGAIN.
WE'LL BE AT RYUUMON CASTLE SOON.


THEIR TARGET IS THE ENTRANCE TO THE EAST— THE SARYU NATION'S RYUUMON CASTLE.
THEY'RE NOW CROSSING THE SEA TO START MOVING SOUTH-WARD.
THE TENROU NATION HAS A LOT OF VIGOR AND POWER AND HAS DESTROYED MANY COUNTRIES.


FORT WATATSUMI
TENROU NATION
SOUKAI NATION'S SMALL SHIP FLEET
TENROU ARMY'S LARGE SHIP FLEET
WE OF SOUKAI...
...WILL ACT AS REINFORCE-MENTS TO HELP OUT OUR ALLY, SARYUU.
RYUUMON CASTLE
SARYUU NATION

WE'LL BE FINE!
REST ASSURED, FUMIO.


SO WE WILL BE FIGHTING TENROU?

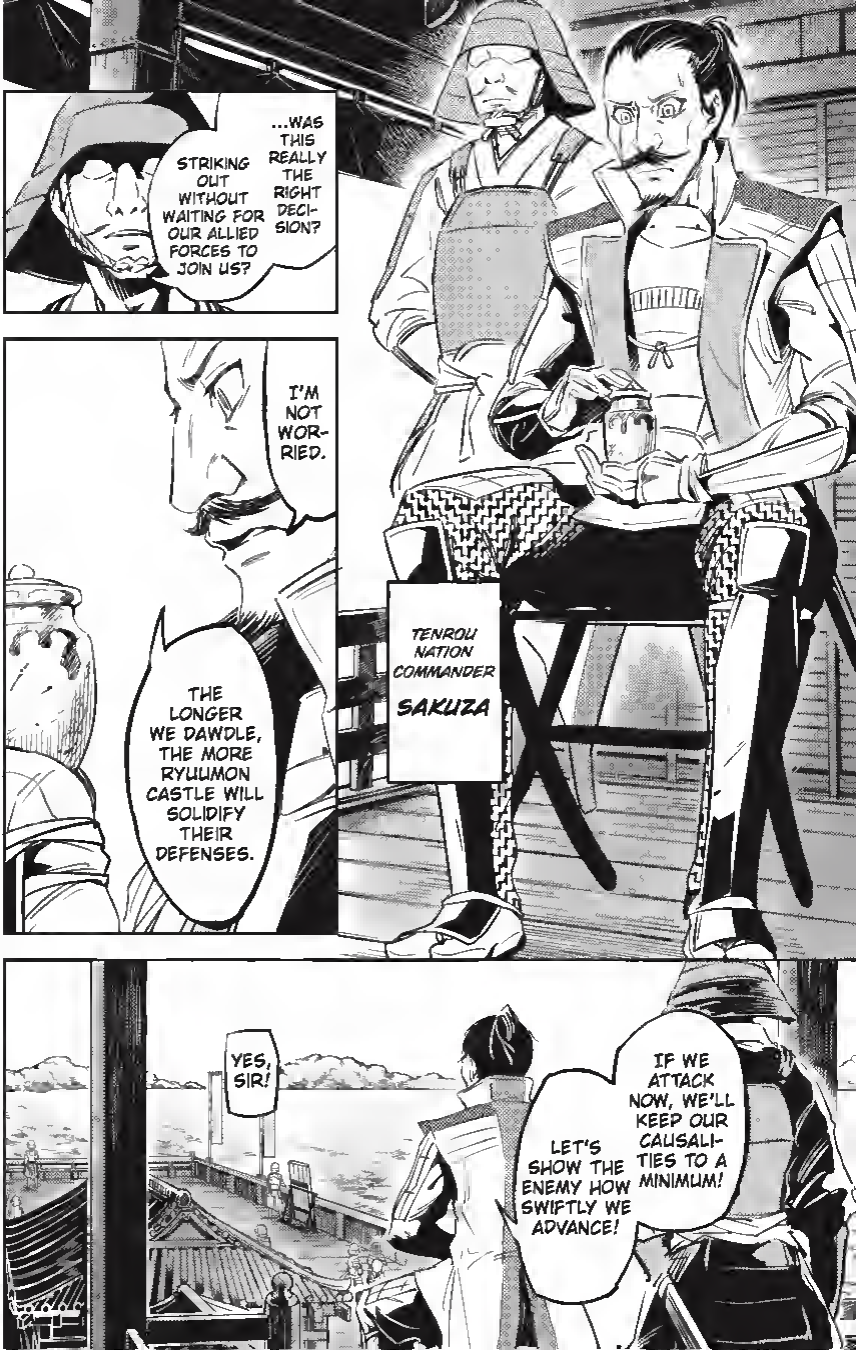
THIS BATTLE WILL BE ON THE WATER.
AND WHEN IT COMES TO HANDLING SHIPS, NOBODY BEATS SOUKAI!
LET'S MAKE THOSE DOGS UNDER-STAND THAT.
CAPTAIN! ARE YOU AIMING FOR ANOTHER BIG FEAT?
OF COURSE.
I HAVE MY EYE ON THE COMMAN-DER'S HEAD.
RIGHT NOW, I MAY ONLY BE THE CAPTAIN OF THIRTY MEN, BUT...
I'M SO LUCKY I ENDED UP IN THE SAME UNIT AS SOME-ONE LIKE THIS.
SHE LOOKS AFTER EACH AND EVERY OF HER MEN.
...YES, CAPTAIN!

...I'M GOING TO ACHIEVE SO MUCH MORE AND MAKE HINOWA A NAME KNOWN FAR AND WIDE UNTIL EVENTUALLY...
...I BECOME A COMMANDER IN CHARGE OF AN ARMY!
WOOOT!
...I CAN PROTECT MY FAMILY FROM MISFORTUNE!
IF I HAVE ENOUGH MONEY AND A HIGH RANK...
...TO SICKNESSES AND DEATH.
THEY WON'T HAVE TO SUCCUMB SO EASILY...

...
I WONDER IF OUR FRIENDS IN SARYU ARE AFRAID, BEING TARGETED BY TENROU.
I'M PUTTING UP WITH THIS WAR-TORN WORLD, BUT IT'S GOOD FOR A SIMPLE FISHER TO POSSESS BIG DREAMS.
SARYUU NATION
RYUU-MON CASTLE
I DON'T KNOW.
PEOPLE OF THE SOUTH ARE PRETTY FERO-CIOUS.
HURRY UP, GUYS! QUICKLY NOW!
IN TWO OR THREE DAYS, THOSE DOGS WILL BE ATTACK-ING US HERE.
SHORE UP OUR DEFENSES AND MAKE IT SNAPPY!
SARYUU NATION
KONGOU

DAH HA HA HA!
I WANT TO GET SOME EXERCISE BEFORE THE FIGHT!
PICK UP THE PACE!
BACHIIIN
COME ON, WHAT'S THE MATTER!?
PLEASE. LET US HANDLE THESE ODD JOBS.
L...
LORD KONGOU.
MESSAGE!
HM?
...THAT WE OF THE SOUTH ARE NOTHING LIKE THOSE BABY CHICKS IN THE CENTRAL TERRITORY!
IF YOU WANT MY DAUGHTER, THEN LET THOSE STARVING DOGS KNOW ...
Y...
YES, SIR ...
...THAT WON'T BE ENOUGH TO GIVE YOU MY DAUGHTER'S HAND IN MARRIAGE.
YOU SEEM READY TO HELP, BUT...

SIR!
IT'S BELIEVED TO BE SAKUZA.
YOU MEAN TO SAY THEY'RE COMING TODAY? AREN'T THEY MOVING A LITTLE QUICKLY?
WHO'S LEADING THEM?
THEY'RE COMING BY SEA!
!!
I HAVE A MESSAGE! THE TENROU ARMY IS ALREADY HEADED THIS WAY!
...I SEE.
THE CHIEF VASSAL OF TENROU, EH?


...WAS THIS REALLY THE RIGHT DECISION?
STRIKING OUT WITHOUT WAITING FOR OUR ALLIED FORCES TO JOIN US?
I'M NOT WORRIED.
THE LONGER WE DAWDLE, THE MORE RYUUMON CASTLE WILL SOLIDIFY THEIR DEFENSES.
TENROU NATION COMMANDER
SAKUZA
IF WE ATTACK NOW, WE'LL KEEP OUR CAUSALITIES TO A MINIMUM!
LET'S SHOW THE ENEMY HOW SWIFTLY WE ADVANCE!
YES, SIR!

EVEN IF WE'RE STEALING THE MARCH ON THEM, IT SHOULD BE FINE SO LONG AS I DO A JOB WELL DONE.
...GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE SHOULDN'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE WITH OUR ATTACK.
...FROM SOME ENIGMATIC FIGURE LIKE YOMIHIME.
NO LONGER WILL I TAKE ORDERS...
IF I DON'T DO WELL HERE...
...I'LL FEEL THE WRATH OF MY LORD.
THE FOREMOST UNIT HAS BEGUN TO TOUCH DOWN ON LAND.
HM.

WE JUST GOT WORD!
THE TENROU ARMY HAS STARTED TO MOVE AHEAD OF TIME AND IS CROSSING THE SEA!
AT THIS RATE, WE'LL BE RUNNING INTO THOSE DOGS' FLEET!
ざわっ
ZAWA CHUUMUDO
A...ARE WE GOING TO BE OKAY RUNNING INTO THEM, CAPTAIN!?
IT APPEARS THEIR FOREMOST UNIT HAS ALREADY STARTED TO MAKE LANDFALL.
MEANING THEY HAVE FEWER FORCES ON THE WATER.
EXACTLY.
WE CAN BEAT THEM!
PREPARE THE FIRE BALLS!
YEAH!!
O...
OH!
THEN THAT MEANS NOW IS OUR CHANCE!
COMMANDER SAKUZA!

ENEMY REINFORCEMENTS HAVE APPEARED AT SEA.
WHAT?
HM. A FLEET FROM THE SOUKAI NATION.
THEY SHOWED UP FAST.
WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
THEY'RE CRAZY IF THEY'RE THINKING OF PITTING THOSE PUNY BOATS AGAINST OUR MIGHTY SHIPS.
SHOWER ARROWS DOWN UPON THOSE COUNTRY BUMPKINS!!

HERE THEY COME!
THEY UNDER-ESTI-MATE OUR SPEED!
KIN (TING)
THEY WON'T ALL HIT!
KIN
HYU
(SHOOHM)
HYU
DO (THUMP)
DO
GUH!

BA (PWIP)
BRING THE SHIP CLOSER TO THE ENEMY FLEET!
COMMANDER SAKUZA! THE ENEMY'S SPEED IS OUT OF THE ORDINARY!
THEY'VE MANAGED TO MAKE IT PAST THE SHOWER OF ARROWS!
...!
SMALL AS THEY MAY BE, THAT'S WAY TOO QUICK...!
BAKI (CRACK)
(WHOOSSHH)
ザアアア

OOOH!
TEACH THOSE DOGS HOW YOU FIGHT ON WATER!
LAUNCH THE FIRE BALLS!
JUJU (FIZZZ)
UWAH!
BARA (FLAKE)
BARA
UWAH!
IS IT AN ENEMY WEAPON!? PUT OUT THE FIRES!
WHAT'S ALL THIS DESTRUCTION?
WHAT'S HAPPENING?
BOOM (SMOOSH)
WU (WHOOSH)

ドドドド
DOOOM
DOOOM
DOOOM
SHIT! I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING WITH ALL THIS SMOKE.
WHERE'S THE ENEMY!?
MY LEG!
STAY CALM!
HYU! (WHOOSH)
STAY FOCUSED! WE OUTNUMBER THEM BY A LANDSLIDE!
LAUNCH THE ARROWS ONE MORE..

A SOUKAI SOL-DIER ...!
FIRST TO ARRIVE!
CURSE YOU, WOMAN!

HAAAAH!
ZAN (SLASH)
DON'T SHRINK BACK!
CUT HER IN TWO!!

ZAN (SLASH)
BUSHI (WARRIOR)
ZA (SLASH)
ZAN

ZAN (SLASH)
...A SUC-CESS!!
I'M GOING TO BE ...
OUTTA THE WAY!
SO STR-ONG ...
WHO ...
WHO IS THIS PERSON?
LET'S GO TOO!
THE CAPTAIN REALLY IS INCREDIBLE!

WHERE IS HE?
WHICH SHIP IS THE ENEMY COMMANDER ON?

I KNOW THAT. DON'T PANIC!
COMMANDER SAKUZA, THE ENEMY WEAPON IS COMING THIS WAY TOO!
BI (SLICE)
BAKU (CHOMP)
.....
TA (THUD)
HOW CAN WE FIGHT BACK?
CURSE THOSE SLIMY SOUKAI FIENDS FOR MAKING A WEAPON LIKE THIS...
INSIDE THE EARTHENWARE EXTERIOR IS A SMALL AMOUNT OF OIL, AS WELL AS THE BLOOD AND BONES OF A SEA MONSTER.

WITH OUR BIGGER SIZE, WE'LL BE SITTING DUCKS FOR THE ENEMY...
RETREAT AT ONCE!
!!

...IS MINE !!
YOUR HEAD ...
I TAKE IT YOU'RE THE FAMOUS COMMANDER.
GWIIN COLMAANG?
!
DON'T UNDERESTIMATE ME!
ARE YOU JUST A LOWLY PRIVATE?

IT APPEARS YOU HAVE SOME SKILL.
.....
KUH!
BIRI BIRI
BIR STING?
BA (HOW?)
THERE WAS A CAVE NEAR MY VILLAGE.
IN ITS DEPTHS WAS A NEST OF SEA MONSTERS.
THAT'S WHERE I HONED MY SKILLS!!
GI (CLANG?
SO!?
FALCON SWEEP !!
!!
GI
GIN

A PRIVATE IS JUST A PRIVATE.
THAT'S ALL YOU'LL EVER BE.
JUST AS I'D EXPECT FROM A TENROU COMMANDER.
KUH!
BUSHI (SPURT)
I AM THE GREAT SAKUZA.
I HAVE SERVED THE TENROU NATION FOR DECADES!
YOU HAVE NOTHING ON ME IN TERMS OF BATTLE EXPERIENCE!
...THAT'S ONLY ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

SHIT
...
!!
グラッ
GURA
(LURCH)
DO
(SLASH)

WHEN IT COMES TO EXPERIENCE ON THE OCEAN...
...I HAVE MORE AS A FISHER!
KOFFI
I'VE BEEN ...
...DE-FEATED BY SOME ... MEA-SLY ...
KOFFI
...PRI-VATE.
WOOOOT!
THE ENEMY COM-MANDER SAKUZA ...
...HAS BEEN KILLED BY HINOWA!!

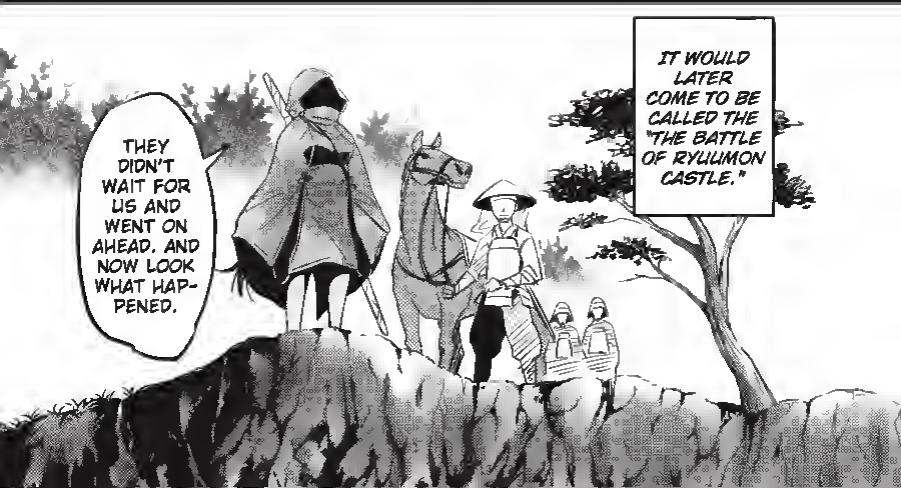
WOOOT! MARRY ME, CAPTAIN!
YOU DID IT! WHAT A WIN!!
THE COM-MAND-ER...
WHA...
MEANWHILE, THE ADVANCED UNIT OF THE TENROU ARMY THAT HAD MADE LANDFALL...
HMPH!!

THIS IS THE MIGHT OF SARYUU, YOU WHELPS!
...WAS UNDER ATTACK BY KONGOU, WHICH HAD COME OUT FROM HIS DEFENSIVE POSITION AT RYUUMON CASTLE.
DAH HA HA!
UWA-AAAH!
EE!
DO (THUD)
DRIVE OFF THESE GOONS WHO DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THEY WERE GETTING INTO WHEN THEY MADE LANDFALL!
GO!!
DO

UHAAH!
ALL RIGHTY THEN.
SINCE NO MORE FOLLOW-UP FORCES ARE TOUCHING DOWN ON LAND, WE CAN PUSH THROUGH.
THE SOUKAI NATION REALLY SAVED OUR BUTTS THIS TIME.
...HM?

IF THAT WERE A MAN, HE'D BE PERFECT FOR MY DAUGHTER.
I DIDN'T REALIZE SOUKAI HAD A YOUNGUN LIKE THAT.
WHAT A SPLENDID WAY TO FIGHT.
OOH...

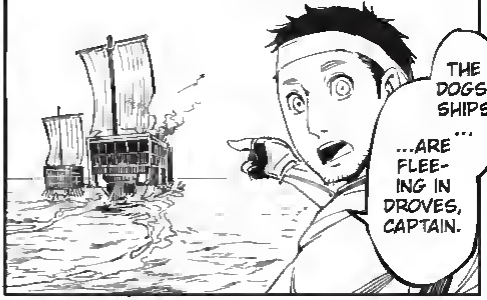
THE TENROU ARMY HAD ATTEMPTED TO ADVANCE TO THE SOUTH, BUT WERE DEFEATED BY THE SARYUU AND SOUKAI'S ALLIED FORCES. SAKUZA DIED IN THE BATTLE.


THEY DIDN'T WAIT FOR US AND WENT ON AHEAD. AND NOW LOOK WHAT HAPPENED.
IT WOULD LATER COME TO BE CALLED THE "THE BATTLE OF RYUUMON CASTLE."

DESPITE HIS DEMISE, HE WAS STILL THE CHIEF VASSAL OF TENROU.
WE CANNOT BRING DOWN RYUUMON CASTLE WITH JUST THE FEW OF US.
WHAT SHALL WE DO, COMMANDER YOMI-HIME?
I WILL TRY TO RETRIEVE SIR SAKUZA'S HEAD.
PREPARE TO MAKE OUR RETREAT.

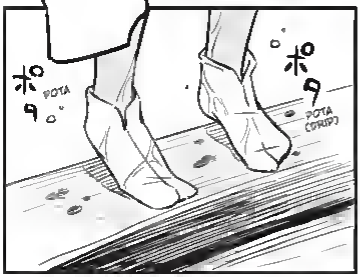
BOTSU
(WHOOSH)
AAALL RIGHT.
WE KILLED ALMOST ALL OF THEM.

YEAH.
YOU DID IT!
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU EVEN GOT THE HEAD OF THE ENEMY COMMANDER.


THE DOGS' SHIPS ...
...ARE FLEEING IN DROVES, CAPTAIN.

IT'D PROBABLY BE DANGEROUS TO GET IN TOO DEEP SINCE THERE'S NO SIGNAL FOR PURSUIT.

ZAPA (SPLASH)
?


POTA
POTA (DRIP)

HINATA...
JUST YOU WAIT.

PHEW.
THE COLD OF THE OCEAN FEELS GOOD, BUT...
...I DON'T LIKE HOW DARK THE SEAFLOOR IS.
TENROU ARMY COMMANDER
YOMIHIME

I SMELL SIR SAKUZA.
LOOKS LIKE I'LL ACHIEVED MY GOAL.
ZORUA (CHILD)
SHE'S WITH THE TENROU NATION!
STAY BACK!
CUT HER DOWN !!

TOO LATE.
RUN ...
EVERYONE, JUMP INTO THE SEA!
QUICKLY !!

YOU GIVE OUT GOOD ORDERS.
YOU'VE SAVED A LOT OF LIVES.
SHUT UP!!
BACHI (SMACK)
DO (THUD)

GWAH!
WHAT ARE YOU...!?
...YOU'RE NOT HUMAN, ARE YOU?
THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION.
EVEN I DON'T KNOW.

GHIIN (CLASHING)
KUH!
IT SEEMS YOU KILLED SIR SAKUZA.
AND IT DOESN'T LOOK TO HAVE BEEN A FLUKE.

AAH!
THIS WILL BE FUN
GIIN (CLANG)
GIIN
GIIN
ピシッ (PISHI (PESHT))

OWOAAAH!!
GI (CLING)
!?
I CAN'T DIE HERE!!
I HAVE FAMILY ...
...WAITING FOR ME!!

...FALCON SWEEP
YURA (HEFT)
I SAW THAT TECHNIQUE IN MY FIGHT EARLIER!!
I CAN DEFLECT IT...

...MONSTER IS SHE...?
WH...WHAT KIND OF..
GUH!
AH!

SHISHA (FASSIO)
しゃ
I'LL FINISH YOU OFF.
YOU POOR THING.

YOU WERE A STRONG ...
... FIGHTER.
IF YOU HADN'T MET ME, YOU PROBABLY WOULD'VE GONE PLACES.
HINA...TA...

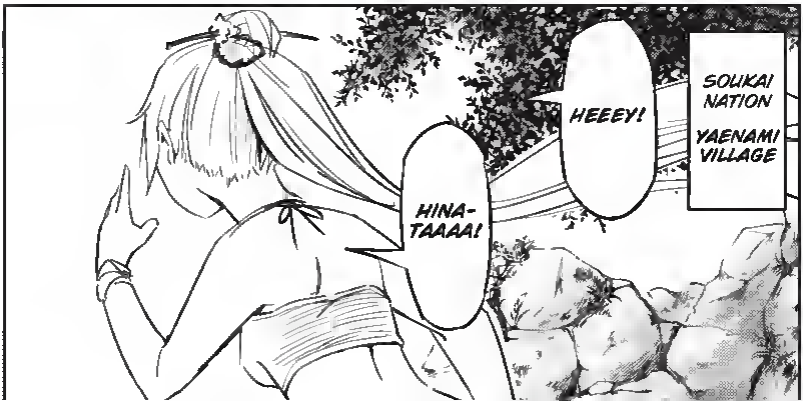
PAAAAHH (POPPP!!)
NOW JOURNEY TO THE UNDERWORLD AND DON'T STRAY ALONG THE WAY.

SOME-
THING
JUST
EXPLO-
DED!
CAPTAIN
HINOWA
!!
CAP-
TAIN
!!
HAS
ANY-
BODY
...
...SEEN
THE
CAPTAIN
...
PAAAN
(POFFP)
!!
TOTO
(PLOP)
AH...
AAH...
THIS
IS...

CAPTAIN HINOWAAA !!
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME...
...I'VE BEEN INJURED IN BATTLE.
AND THE ARMY'S FIRST CRUSHING DEFEAT IN A WHILE.

IT MIGHT BE IN SIGHT BUT STILL A LONG WAYS OFF.
TENROU'S PATH TO UNIFYING ALL THE NATIONS...
THIS REGION'S MAP SHOWING THEIR SCOPE OF INFLUENCE DIDN'T CHANGE MUCH...
...AND BEGAN POURING THEIR EFFORTS INTO INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THEIR TERRITORY.
THE TENROU ARMY RET-REATED ...

...OVER THE COURSE OF THE NEXT TEN YEARS.



TOBARI.
I'M NOT HINATA ANYMORE.
HINATA, ARE YOU AROUND?
WE'VE GOT A SITUA-TION!
WHAT'S UP?
...WERE YOU LOOKING AT THE OCEAN AGAIN? YOU SURE DO LIKE IT.
OOPS. DID I CALL YOU BY YOUR OLD NAME AGAIN?
I'D FORGOT-TEN YOU CHANGED IT!
WHAT?
...I CAME UPON AN UNCON-CIOUS BODY!
I WAS DOING MY AWESOME TRAINING ON THE BEACH AS USUAL, WHEN...
OH!
I ALMOST FORGOT!!

I WONDER WHERE THEY WASHED UP FROM.
WELL, LET'S GO CHECK IT OUT!
ZAPA— (SPLASH)
ALSO! THEY WERE WEARING CLOTHES I'D NEVER SEEN BEFORE!
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE JUST LEFT THEM LIKE THAT.
THEY SAY YOU SHOULD NOT MOVE SOMEBODY IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING!
IT'S NOT LIKE I WAS SCARED, HINATA!
I TOLD YOU ALREADY...
...TOBARI.
I'M NO LONGER HINATA.
I'M HINOWA.

IT'S ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF MY MOM'S AMBITIONS TO HAVE HER NAME BE KNOWN ALL OVER.
SO I WANT TO CARRY ON HER WISH.
HINA... HINO-WA.
WHY'D YOU CHANGE YOUR NAME AGAIN?
YOU MAKE THINGS SO COMPLI-CATED.
I WILL LIVE AS HINOWA.
AND PUT AN END TO THESE WAR-TORN TIMES!

A WORLD IN WHICH ONE'S OWN FLESH AND BLOOD MUST DIE IN BATTLE...
...IS NO KIND OF WORLD TO LIVE IN!
TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT CHAPTER...!

Translation Notes

Page 13
Isonade is a mythical shark-like demon sea monster with a barbed tail fin.

Page 14
What Hinowa has prepared is called *namerou*, a style of preparing fish (mincing and pounding it and then serving it as a cake) that is very much like tartare.

Page 16
Tenrou is a name meaning "heaven wolf" and the Japanese name for the Sirius (Canis Major) constellation. Also known as the "dog star," this is why the shipmen derogatorily refer to Tenrou nationals as "dogs."

Ryuumon is spelled with characters that mean "dragon gate"—an appropriate name for the gate that leads to the rest of the Tenrou Nation's conquest.

The name of Hinowa's country, *Soukai*, means "blue sea" and reflects her countrymen who are sea-based fishermen and ship experts.

The third nation, *Saryuu*, is a name that means "sand dragon," leaving the impression that all three realms—sky, sea, and land—have been covered by these three nations.

Hinowa ga CRUSH!
Chapter 1

Takahiro
strelka

Translation: Christine Dashiell • Lettering: Rochelle Gancio

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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